

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please amend the abstract according to the following amended abstract. Numbers to be deleted are enclosed in double brackets.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In a drive shaft support structure for a marine propulsion machine, a gear case [[15]] is provided with a vertical drive shaft receiving bore [[15b]], and a drive shaft [[21]] driven by an internal combustion engine is supported for rotation in the drive shaft receiving bore [[15b]]. A gear case [[15]] is provided with a gear chamber [[15a]] connected to the lower end of the drive shaft receiving bore [[15b]]. A bevel gear mechanism [[22]] for transmitting power from the drive shaft [[21]] to a propeller shaft [[24]] is disposed in the gear chamber [[15a]]. The drive shaft [[21]] is supported for rotation in a bearing [[37]]. The bearing [[37]] is fitted in the drive shaft receiving bore [[15b]] and is held fixedly in place with a bearing-fastening member [[38]] screwed in an internal threaded part of the drive shaft receiving bore [[15b]]. A covering member [[40]] provided with a central hole through which the drive shaft [[21]] is passed is attached to the gear case [[15]] so as to close the open upper end of the drive shaft receiving bore [[15b]] in a liquid-tight fashion. The bearing [[37]] is held fixedly in the gear case [[15]] to prevent the vertical movement of the drive shaft [[21]].